

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims pending in the instant application are numbered 1-51. Claims 1-4, 6-14, 16, 20-24, 26-28, 30, 31, 40-48, 50 and 51 presently stand rejected. Claims 5, 15, 17-19, 25, 29 and 49 presently stand objected to. The Applicants note with appreciation that claims 32-39 are allowed. Claims 4-5, 9-10, 15, 23, 25, 29, 40-46, and 48-49 are canceled herein without prejudice. Claims 1, 6, 11, 17-19, 22, 28 and 47 have been amended herewith. Therefore, claims now pending are numbered 1-3, 6-8, 11-14, 16-22, 24, 26-28, 30-39, 47 and 50-51. The Applicants respectfully request that the instant application be reconsidered in view of the amendments and following remarks.

Notice of Non-Compliant Amendment

In the Notice of Non-Compliant Amendment mailed April 15, 2005, it is brought to the Applicants' attention that the previously filed Amendment and Response was not in conformity with the amendment format required by 37 CFR § 1.121. In particular, the status identifier of claims 50 and 51 indicated "previously submitted" instead of the proper status identifier of "previously presented." Accordingly, the status identifiers of claims 50 and 51 have been corrected herewith in conformity with 37 CFR § 1.121 to indicate "previously presented."

35 U.S.C. § 102 and 103 Rejections

In the December 2, 2004 Office Action, claims 1-4, 7-14, 20-24, 26-28, 30, 31, 40, 41, 43-48, 50 and 51 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Chan et al., US Patent No. 6,504,634 (hereinafter Chan). In the December 2, 2004 Office Action, claims 6, 16, and 42 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being anticipated by Chan in view of Degura, US Patent No. 5,684,614.

The December 2, 2004 Office Action indicates that claims 5, 15, 17-19, 25, 29 and 49

are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

In order to expedite a timely allowance of the instant patent application, the Applicant has amended independent claim 1 to include the limitations of conditionally allowed claim 5 and intervening claim 4, claims 9-10 have been canceled, independent claim 11 has been amended to include the limitations of conditionally allowed claim 15, independent claim 22 has been amended to include the limitations of conditionally allowed 25 and intervening claim 23, independent claim 28 has been amended to include the limitations of conditionally allowed 29, claims 40-46 have been canceled and claim 47 has been amended to include the limitations of conditionally allowed claim 49 and intervening claim 48. The remaining dependent claims have been amended as appropriate to cure any antecedent basis problems that would have otherwise resulted from the previously described amendments. Accordingly, the Applicant understands that the instant application should now be in condition for allowance and respectfully requests that the instant section 102 and 103 rejections be withdrawn.

If there is a deficiency in fees, please charge our Deposit Acct. No. 02-2666.

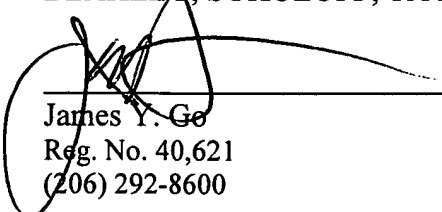
The Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,

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